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"But I have a theory of my own—if I am prepared to be nice to the customers, they will respond, and you don't have to bother. And it works, because if I come to work feeling out of sorts and tired and can't be bothered going out of my way for anyone, I find the customers all seem to be in the same mood. You'd be surprised what a difference it makes."

## CHEMIST

"THE worst customers we have to put up with are the ones who have a day to fill in, and spend it walking the town asking for all the rationed or unprocurable articles imaginable." This was the opinion of a chemist who said he was utterly fed up with having to inform people that since the war started he was no longer getting his normal supply of films, and so on. "It's the same old story," he said, "if a person knows that something is scarce, the acquisition of it becomes an obsession."

"And then there is the dear old lady who wants a tin of the talcum powder she has used for years—longer than she can remember. After it has all been explained to her, she says with a hurt expression, 'I thought you would have had an odd tin hidden away.' We did have an odd tin about three years ago."

"We spend much of our time trying gently to persuade people that it is useless to expect to find 'just one' hot water bag this winter, and 'informing them that even without import restrictions, stocks of that eau-de-Cologne would not be available because the enemy factory that produced it has been bombed out of existence by the Allied Air Forces."

## POST OFFICE CLERK

"WHAT do I think of the General Public? I don't; it's the only way to keep sane. I had no idea people could be so thick-headed and woolly till I started serving behind this counter; now my opinion of human nature is very low."

"What irritates you in particular?"

"Well, all the people who come in all the time for a twopenny stamp and hand over a £1 note; all the people who write telegrams and forget to put their name on the back; all the people who think that only *their* business is important, and glare at me across the counter when I'm rushing to catch the mail with the registered letters; all the people who come in every day after mail has closed and ask if the mail has closed and then add, couldn't I just squeeze in their little letter; all the people who never seem to understand how to fill in a form, however many times we explain it to them; all the people who never know anything about anything and hold up a queue of 10 or 15 people while they haggle over some silly little question; all the people. . ."

At this stage we felt it was time to leave, for quite a considerable queue had formed up behind us.

## MUSIC SHOP

"YOU probably won't believe me," said one assistant, "when I tell you that people come in here, with all this music displayed on the counters and in the racks, and ask if we sell music! And some of those who don't, are just about as bad. They can't understand why there should be any shortage of music. The other

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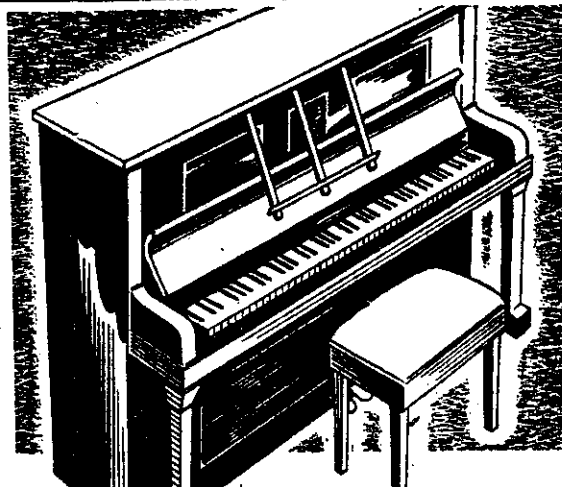
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